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DE RUEHKO #1086/01 1330905
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O 130905Z MAY 09
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2916
INFO RUEHZN/ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE
RUEHME/AMEMBASSY MEXICO CITY 0627
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 5254
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 9236
RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 3960
RUEHNAG/AMCONSUL NAGOYA 1590
RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA 6290
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 7762
RUEHKS/AMCONSUL SAPPORO 4491
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 3526
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 5023
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUEHRC/USDA FAS WASHDC 8628
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHINGTON DC
RHMFIUU/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY IA WASHINGTON DC
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RHMFIUU/USFJ

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 001086

DEPT FOR OES/IHB AMBASSADOR LOFTIS
DEPT FOR EAP/J, EAP/EX, CA
USDA PASS TO APHIS, FAS FOR BURDETT
HHS PASS TO CDC
HHS FOR OGHA
DEPT PASS TO AID/GH/HIDN

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KFLU](#) [AEMR](#) [AESC](#) [CASC](#) [KFLO](#) [TBIO](#) [KSAF](#) [KPAO](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#)

AMGT, MG, EAGR, JA

SUBJECT: MGSF01 JAPAN'S RESPONSE TO H1N1 OUTBREAK

REF: TOKYO 1072 and previous

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Sensitive but Unclassified. Please handle accordingly.

1. This message contains an Action Request, please see para. 9.

2. (SBU) Summary: Four human cases of Type A H1N1 influenza have been confirmed in Japan. While no Americans were among the infected, four Americans who had been confined to their Kyoto hotel rooms because of their suspected proximity to an infected passenger were released from voluntary confinement May 13 after authorities confirmed that the persons involved had indeed changed seats and were not in fact seated near the infected person. No flu symptoms have been detected among ten Japanese who had been seated on a flight near a Chinese passenger who later tested positive for H1N1 in China. The GOJ may recommend less stringent measures to respond to a potential spread of H1N1 cases within Japan. Japan plans to begin production of an H1N1 vaccine in June 2009. Some air carriers noted sharp drops in travel to and from Japan. Several universities have taken measures to limit contact with foreign visitors. Action Request: Embassy would appreciate information about the status of a GOJ request to the CDC to use a CDC-origin H1N1 virus strain in intensified H1N1 surveillance among Japan's swine population. End Summary.

3. (U) As of May 13, 2009 1700 local time, four human cases of the novel Type A H1N1 influenza have been confirmed in Japan. The four Japanese citizens continue to undergo treatment in isolation at medical facilities near Narita Airport.

4. (SBU) Kyoto City Health officials told Consulate General Osaka officers May 13 that four Americans, who agreed to remain confined

to their Kyoto hotel rooms May 10 because their ticket stubs showed their sitting close to an H1N1 infected passenger, were now free to leave their hotel rooms. The four Americans from the May 8 Northwest Airlines flight from Detroit to Narita had, in fact, changed seats before the flight's departure. Kyoto municipal officials agreed this was the case May 13. Media report Kyoto city offered an apology to the four American tourists and will continue to monitor their health conditions. The Health Ministry and local governments had also told the press May 11 that flu symptoms have not been detected among the ten Japanese passengers who were seated on a May 8 flight near a Chinese passenger who later tested positive for H1N1 in China. In line with GOJ procedures, United States Forces Japan and U.S. military bases in Japan continue to coordinate with the GOJ and local governments to contact and monitor the health of SOFA personnel determined to have arrived in Japan on flights with infected passengers.

15. (SBU) Media report the GOJ may recommend less stringent measures in response to a possible spread of the current H1N1 virus. For example, while the initial plan was to close schools and cancel public events if there were even a simple occurrence in a prefecture, the GOJ may no longer recommend this course of action. Health Minister Masuzoe told the press the GOJ plans to shorten somewhat the current ten-day isolation period for individuals determined to have come into close contact with H1N1 cases. A committee of experts will determine the details of the change.

16. (SBU) Japan's National Institute for Infectious Diseases (NIID), according to press reports, plans to distribute H1N1 virus stock to pharmaceutical manufacturers in June to begin production of an H1N1 flu vaccine. An NIID official said the Institute is considering using both traditional egg-based techniques as well as advanced genetic technology to develop the seed virus for the vaccine. Japan

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currently has four production facilities that produce seasonal influenza vaccine. Health Minister Masuzoe told the press May 12 his Ministry will decide in June on the allocation of Japan's production capacity to seasonal and H1N1 influenza vaccine.

17. (SBU) Officials at U.S. and Japanese airlines have told embassies passenger air travel to/from Japan is down significantly since the start of the H1N1 outbreak. Airline officials said screening procedures at Japan's airports have resulted in 30-50 minute delays for disembarkation and are producing a "ripple effect" that holds up other operations such as baggage handling and cleaning aircraft. Officials from one U.S. airline said the impact on operations has been greater in Japan than elsewhere in Asia, such as Hong Kong and China. Another U.S. airline representative noted the Japanese media seem to focus their reporting on suspected H1N1 cases arriving on U.S. carrier flights, rather than on flights from the U.S. operated by Japanese carriers.

18. (SBU) Keio University officials told embassies a number of the University's departments have advised staff to be cautious in contacts with foreigners and to limit foreign visitors to Keio facilities due to H1N1 concerns. A professor at Kurume University who returned from Belgium and the Netherlands earlier this week was told not to come to work for ten days, as he had visited a country with an H1N1 outbreak.

19. (SBU) In a May 11 letter to CDC's WHO Collaborating Center, the Director-General of Japan's National Institute of Animal Health (NIAH) requested approval to use the H1N1 virus strain (A/California/04/2009(H1N1)) initially provided by the CDC to Japan's NIID. The Ministry of Agriculture's Chief Veterinary Officer also sent letters to USDA and CDC May 11 referencing the request and noting the GOJ intends to use the virus strain to intensify H1N1 surveillance among Japan's pig population. Action Request: Embassy would appreciate information on the status of NIAH's request.

ZUMWALT